

Innovation Team's Portfolio to Address Disparities Facing Young Black Men

THE NEED // INTRODUCTION

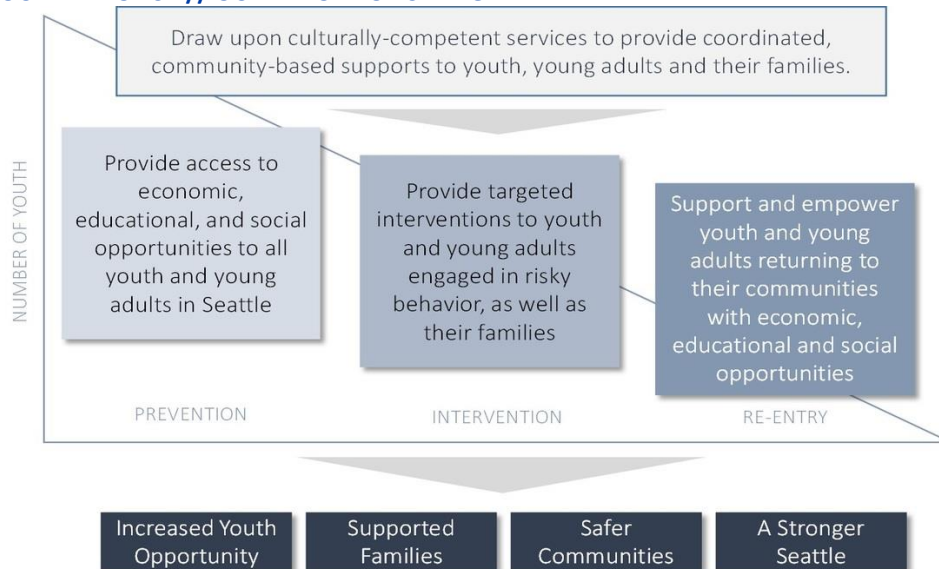
Opportunities abound in Seattle, yet disparities persist for young black men related to economic, educational, and social outcomes. These disparities manifest themselves in many ways: A disproportionately high impact of violence, reduced access to opportunity, and perceived lower levels of well-being. In recent years, Seattle has seen an increase in youth involved in shootings and domestic violence and this violence has disproportionately affected communities of color.

However, to position this work as simply about deficits is to perpetuate the idea that young black men are problems to be fixed. In our conversations with youth themselves, as well as the providers who serve them, we heard several key messages loud and clear:

- That we are not the other.
- That we are not a problem to be fixed.
- That we are fathers and brothers and sons.
- That you see us, and value us, and need us.

Through these conversations, the innovation team struck upon a powerful truth: the health of black men is essential to the health of society. Our portfolio seeks to reduce the impact of violence on young black men while providing access to opportunities that are needed to thrive, and we recognize that this is only the start of a focused City effort to support and empower young black men in Seattle to be their best.

OUR APPROACH // OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



THE RESULTS // THE PORTFOLIO

- **Our Best:** Our Best is the City of Seattle's first ever initiative focusing specifically on improving life outcomes for young Black men. The initiative represents a focused investment by the Mayor that focuses on improving life outcomes for young Black men aged 14-24, working across all City

DEPARTMENT PARTNER

Human Services Department (HSD)
Youth and Family Empowerment Division

PROJECT DURATION

Sept 2015 – Dec 2016

IMPACT

Increased access to opportunity
Decreased impact of violence

KEY DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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departments and with community partners in the areas of education, employment, health, safety and positive relationships. The initiative creates the new role of Special Advisor to the Mayor focused on black male achievement, calls for the convening of the Our Best Advisory Council, and creates a robust new mentoring campaign aimed at doubling the number of black men serving as mentors.

- **Opportunity Fund:** Seattle's Opportunity Fund provides small grants to support agencies that work with youth and young adults of color from the ages of 12 through 24, with an emphasis on community-initiated projects that are designed and led by volunteers or staff that reflect the cultures and languages of the participants. This funding opportunity is in its third year and was the result of the Innovation Team's engagement with community stakeholders.
- **Seattle LINC:** The City of Seattle is partnering with the Center for Children & Youth Justice to implement OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM) in Seattle. Known as Seattle LINC, the goal of this multidisciplinary team is to coordinate service provision to high risk and gang involved young adults beginning in January 2017. The CGM includes five strategies to address youth violence: 1) Community Mobilization, 2) Opportunities Provision, 3) Social Intervention, 4) Suppression, and 5) Organizational Change and Development. One of the key strategies in the model is Opportunities Provision through the use of multidisciplinary intervention teams. These teams are comprised of justice and service agencies to provide wraparound supports for 18 to 24 year old youth identified as most at risk of violence. Wraparound support is delivered in the form of coordinated services and team-based case management to youth, as well as additional prevention and intervention activities needed to meet short and long term goals. The goal of intervention teams is to provide the alternative opportunities that youth need to achieve positive outcomes.

OUR ROLE

Functional Capabilities

- Project Management
- Meeting Facilitation
- Coordination across departments

Specialized skillsets

- Outcome Measurement
- Human-Centered Design



Seattle
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